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**Linda McCulloch
Superintendent**

DATE: April 11, 2006

TO: Summer Food Service Program Sponsors

FROM: Christine Emerson, Director, School Nutrition Programs

SUBJECT: U.S. Armed Forces Family Supplemental Subsistence Allowance –
Excluded from Income Consideration

In accordance with Public Law 108-375, any Family Subsistence Supplemental Allowance (FSSA) that a household receives must not be treated as income in determining eligibility for free and reduced-price meals under the School Nutrition Programs. This memorandum supersedes the policy for FSSA in the eligibility guidance for applications taken in Fiscal Years 2005 and 2006.

Since May 2001, the U.S. Department of Defense has paid certain members of the Armed Forces and their families an FSSA. The FSSA is designed to bring a household's income up to 130 percent of the federal poverty line and decrease the reliance on food stamps for affected members and their families. The amount of the FSSA, based on household size and income, may not exceed \$500 per month. Previously, for purposes of School Nutrition Programs (SNP) eligibility determination, the FSSA payments were counted as earned income for households (see Q and A #2 on page 37 of the August 2001, *Eligibility Guidance for School Meals Manual*). However, in Section 602 of the *Ronald W. Reagan National Defense Authorization Act* for Fiscal Year 2005, Public Law 108-375, Congress specified that in the event that counting the FSSA as income would put a family over the SNP limits, the family must be considered eligible to receive SNP benefits. Public Law 108-375 amends a standing provision that is not tied specifically to the appropriations process; therefore, this amendment is effective until the provision expires at the end of Fiscal Year 2006.

If there are any questions concerning this policy, please contact School Nutrition Programs at (406) 444-2501.